

Fruit of the Spirit

SCRIPTURE - Nehemiah 7 & Galatians 5:22-23

ACTIVITY MATERIALS:

2 people outline printouts (one small and one large), markers/crayons, glue, scissors.

INTRODUCTION:

We've been reading through and studying Nehemiah. Today we are going to look at another part of the Bible that relates very well to the book of Nehemiah. We've learned over the past several weeks that Nehemiah was a man of God, when he faced a hardship or decision he stopped to pray. He was led by God and lived differently because of it. In Nehemiah 7 there is another list of names, but just like before there is so much more in it.

In Nehemiah 7 they had just completed the wall and began appointing officials. He was then led by God to register the people by genealogy. This was a huge undertaking but he did it because God led him to it. In doing this he came across a group of people who couldn't be found in the records, there was no way of knowing if they were actually Israelites. Do you want to know what Nehemiah did? He didn't turn them away, he included them anyway. This is a foreshadowing of what is to come when Christ Jesus came to earth to live, die, and be resurrected so that you and me could be included in God's genealogy/God's children.

So what does all of this have to do with the fruit of the Spirit? Well, everything. See the wall was finished - the outside looked complete because it was but the inside wasn't - but it still had work to do. We are not complete when we look good, or look like we are doing the right thing and following the rules. We are complete when our inside changes, when we are part of God's genealogy and we begin to show Him from the inside out.

How do we do that? How do we change on the inside? We change through a relationship with Christ. As we grow in our relationship with Christ our insides change in a way that are reflected in the outside, the Fruit of the Spirit offers some great examples of what that looks like.

ACTIVITY 1 (part1):

Give each child a printed outline of a person. Instruct the children to color their outline to look like them.

ASK: Do you like for your inside to match your outside? If you feel healthy do you want to look sick? If you are kind do you want to appear mean?

SAY: We typically want our inside to match our outside. The best way to do that is to let God work in us and through us.

As God works in us our lives change, particular how we feel and act. The way we act is referred to as fruit and we want our fruit to be good and to be from God. This is where The Fruit of the Spirit helps to guide us.

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 5:22-23a

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self control.”

ACTIVITY 1 (part 2):

During this discussion of Galatians 5:22-23a hand each child a smaller version of the person outline (you could cut it out in advance or allow them to cut it out). While you discuss the different parts of the fruit of the Spirit ask the children to draw what they think each one would look like inside the smaller outline.

As God works in you showing you love and forgiveness in your own life it helps to group you into being a more Christ like person.

Q: *What do you think love looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think joy looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think peace looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think patience looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think kindness looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think goodness looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think faith looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think gentleness looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

Q: *What do you think self control looks like?*

A: *Answers will vary. Give examples.*

DISCUSSION/CLOSING:

ACTIVITY 1 (part 3) :As you discuss instruct the children to glue their smaller outline on top of the out line they colored of themselves, this is to represent the way God changes us on the inside and our outside follows.

When we think of how we want to be treated or how we want to treat others do many of these fruit of the Spirit come to mind? Do you think Jesus would want us to act this way? How can we get these fruit of the Spirit? We first must know Jesus as our personal Lord and Savior (that's salvation) then we need to live a life that is focused on Him and obey Him. When we do these things we will begin to fe filled with the fruit of the Spirit and have our insides changed which will show on the outside.

PRAYER TIME

Take a few moments to thank God for his blessings. Pray for your family. Pray for our church. Pray for our country and its leaders. Pray that God would help you to change from the inside out.



